

News Release – Ohio High School Athletic Association

Executive Director Doug Ute

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For Immediate Release – Feb. 19, 2026

OASSA Contact – Tim Freeman, Executive Director, tfreeman@oassa.org

OHSAA Contact – Tim Stried, Director of Media Relations, tstried@ohsaa.org

OASSA and OHSAA Announce Cheerleading Tournament Partnership

State principal's association has conducted the cheerleading state tournament for the last 34 years

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA) and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) have announced the establishment of a new partnership that will recognize the annual OASSA High School Cheerleading State Championship as the official cheerleading state championship for Ohio.

OASSA, on behalf of Ohio school leaders, has hosted the Ohio Cheerleading State Championship for the past 34 years. This new partnership with the OHSAA acknowledges the experience and expertise that OASSA provides when planning and supervising a cheer state tournament.

“The OASSA has successfully hosted the cheerleading state tournament for many years and we are excited to partner with them as we look to add cheerleading as an official OHSAA-recognized sport in the near future,” said Doug Ute, OHSAA Executive Director. “High school principals, which belong to OASSA, are the voting members in our association, so this move to further link the OHSAA with the OASSA is a win-win situation.”

The partnership is the first step towards the recognition and adoption of competitive cheerleading as an OHSAA recognized sport in member schools, possibly as early as the 2027-28 school year. Under this new partnership with the OHSAA, OASSA will continue to host the Ohio Cheerleading State Championship each year moving forward.

“We are very excited about what the future holds,” said Tim Freeman, OASSA Executive Director. “As Ohio school leaders, OASSA members and our Board of Directors have had a longstanding partnership with the OHSAA. That partnership has always been directed at supporting Ohio's students, student-athletes, their teams, schools and communities. Thousands of Ohio high school cheerleaders compete at the OASSA championships each year. Their coaches, parents, and administrators work very hard to make that happen. This new partnership is a great example of cooperation and is an important step forward for Ohio interscholastic cheer.”

Across Ohio, thousands of student-athletes participate in cheer programs at their OHSAA member schools. These cheerleaders devote the same time, energy, hard work, sacrifice and dedication as other student-athletes. The OHSAA and OASSA celebrate this partnership as an opportunity to fully recognize them as an important part of their school's interscholastic athletic programs.

Next school year, the 2026-27 OASSA competition program will continue in its current structure with one exciting change. The Game Day cheerleading category will shift from its current place in the winter to the fall, with a Game Day State Championship Tournament scheduled for early November. The current rules, regulations and scoring structures used by OASSA will remain in place for the 2026-27 seasons.

OHSAA

Tim Stried

Director of Media Relations

Ohio High School Athletic Association

4080 Roselea Place

Columbus, OH 43214

614-267-2502, ext. 124

tstried@ohsaa.org

www.OHSAA.org

www.Twitter.com/OHSAASports

www.Facebook.com/OHSAASports

www.Instagram.com/OHSAASports

www.TikTok.com/ohsaa_sports